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calamity to all. This felicitous doctrine is beginning to be reduced to practical realization in the intercourse of nations. The most happy consequences have already ensued from it; and human progress has great hope in it for the future.

Enough has already been said to show that the legislation of modern times is largely indebted to the science of political economy for its improvement. The science itself is daily assuming a more definite form, and daily gaining increased respect from practical men. Economical legislation has now a surer ground than mere opinion to rest upon; and we may hope that it will cease making vast and uncertain experiments with the welfare of nations, and will seek a solution of its great problems by means of the fixed principles of political economy. It is certainly incumbent upon legislators vigilantly to learn its truths, to watch its development, and to note all the changes which time produces in it; and then to see that the art which they practise keeps pace with the science which is its chief aid. But the condition of the greatest influence of political economy upon legislation is popular knowledge; and in the general diffusion of knowledge and the enlightened spirit of the age it has its surest means of advancing the progress of humanity.

ART. XI. — 1. *Les Lettres d'Everard*. Par P. LANFREY.

2. *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*. Tom. XVII. Par M. THIERS.

3. *Le Duc Job. Une Comédie*. Par LÉON LAYA.

4. *Le Père Prodigue. Une Comédie*. Par A. DUMAS (Fils).

5. *Port Royal*. Par SAINTE BEUVE. 6 vols.

RARELY has a book had the success of *Les Lettres d'Everard*, and rarely has a book so thoroughly merited success. We are not aware that any article has been written upon it, or that any journal of note has ever alluded to it; yet this curious work is in every hand in France, and it is hard to meet any one who has not read it, and who has not

formed upon it the same favorable opinion we have above recorded. Report, from sources which we cannot but regard as perfectly authentic, affirms that the most positive orders were issued in Paris to the entire government press, enjoining that no notice whatever should be taken of the book; and we confess that, after carefully reading it, we can fully understand the apparent necessity of such a proceeding to persons used to the practices of despotism. M. Lanfrey's work, without mentioning the name of the Emperor, is the most severe attack upon the second Empire that has been published. But it is not an attack upon the Empire only, it is an attack also upon France,—upon the condition to which her present institutions, coming as they do after a series of revolutions, have brought the French race.

It is difficult at first to see under what precise category of works of fiction *Les Lettres d'Everard* is to be classed. It is not a biography nor an autobiography, although its sole subject is the psychological development of one man, and the record of the sufferings which end by crushing him out of life. It is hardly to be styled a novel, for it has no plot and no love-story; there is scarcely what is to be called an "incident," certainly not an "adventure," in the whole volume; and yet it seizes on the reader with the charm of romance, and this charm attaches itself to a fictitious personage. We, however, suppose the great interest of the work to have its source in what circumscribes that interest, and, so to speak, *localizes* it. What attracts the reader of M. Lanfrey's volume is its truth, and that truth can be appreciated only by those who have lived long enough in France to enter into the conflicting feelings of the present generation. We doubt whether *Les Lettres d'Everard* could be read to the end by any one who is not familiar with French civilization in these days; whereas to those who either know anything of modern France, or have any care for her grandeur or decay, the book is one of such intense attraction that it cannot be laid down when once opened.

We look upon *Les Lettres d'Everard* as a work so very important to the foreign reader, that we will, as much as

possible, let the author speak for himself, only guiding the attention of our countrymen to this or that topic, as it is treated in these strange pages. In the very first pages of the Introduction, M. Lanfrey tells us who and what his hero is:—

“At all periods of time men are to be met, whose ideas, characters, passions, tastes, and prejudices even, are in direct contradiction to the spirit of their age, and who refuse obstinately to bend before that spirit, to bow to the authority of their time. This resistance to the despotic sway of received opinions does not always come, as the crowd likes to declare, from mere eccentricity of temper, which is the pretext of cowards and the excuse of fools. From this revolt have sprung heroes who are the honor of human nature, and by this one particular form of opposition none are tempted save proud and powerful natures.”

This at once tells us that M. Lanfrey's *Everard* is one of these solitary strugglers, out of harmony with the age; and out of harmony with it precisely because he is in perfect harmony with everything noble and great, and vibrates through every fibre of his whole being to the faintest touch of the sublime. Now it may be objected, at the outset, that characters like this have been produced at all periods, and in other countries than France; but there are peculiarities in the incompatibility visible between *Everard* and all around him, that mark him with the exclusive impress of the Frenchman of our present epoch. At almost every period of the world's history there has been some one point in time and space where a despotism has established itself, and been opposed by a resolute few. The chronicles of oppression are everywhere the chronicles of contest, of courage, and mostly of success, that in the end crowns a righteous cause. But what characterizes the actual condition of France is the hopeless, helpless lassitude of an entire race, its complicity in its own debasement, its acquiescence in its own shame. It is against this that M. Lanfrey's hero protests. “One may rise up against a mere tyrant,” he exclaims, “and the chances are that your movement will be the signal of a general rising against his force; but you cannot rise up against the heavy, stupid, unimpres-sible weight of *a crowd*.” It is against the languid, dull,

lethargic state to which the French nation has gradually come, that M. Lanfrey raises his voice. With all this palsied old age his youth can find no sympathy, with this utter listlessness and torpor his activity has no possible contact, with these political corpses the strong political life within him has no possible communion.

"These letters," says the author, "are the records of the last vain, useless effort made by Everard to vanquish the obstacles surrounding him; his last endeavor to break from a solitude that ill suited his temper and his years; the last struggle to obtain for his own ideas the support of an exterior and combined force. Perhaps it will be said that the attempt was a foolish one, because its issue was unsatisfactory; but the result is not the infallible rule whereby everything is to be judged. In nine cases out of ten, the future reverses the sentence of the immediate past. Nothing is lost in this world, nothing occurs in vain, not even a defeat, when the defeat is suffered in the pursuit of a high and legitimate aim; for — let it be well reflected upon — ultimate success springs, for the most part, only from a long line of lesser failures which break up the path. It is easy to say that his age condemns this man or that, — it being a dogma of our time that the judgment of the age is sure to be right; but that proves nothing to the thinker, and were all the maxim-makers of all centuries to rise up against the defeated and condemn him, there is still this to be said: that when so many rare and noble qualities, when love of freedom, honor-worship, fidelity to convictions, noble and disinterested ambition, — when these become the inevitable cause of utter ruin to him who clings to them devotedly, — of his ruin for the reason that *he clings to them when the epoch has forsworn them*, — when the case stands thus, who shall give preference to the age over the man? Who shall hesitate to say where lies the right, and where the crime?"

These few lines show at once the tendencies of the book, and nobler tendencies never were. But the book can have its full effect, and achieve its entire aim, only when read by those who either have already an extensive knowledge of the affairs of contemporary France, or who desire seriously to be made more familiar with them. Whether, therefore, the work be opened by persons to whom its contents only bring the complement of large stores of information already gained, or whether it be full of absolute revelations, *Les Lettres d'Everard* is a work of pre-eminent importance in the literary history of our

day, and in the philosophical and moral history of a nation and a race. We, whose special study has been the moral, political, and social state of France for many years, deliberately declare it as our opinion, that nothing, since the appearance of M. de Châteaubriand's *René*, has attained to anything like the importance of this book; and we can readily comprehend the eagerness of the ruling authorities to prevent its being publicly noticed, for it contains their condemnation, as well as the eagerness of the public to absorb its contents, for its contents are Truth.

Among the numerous evils which the permanently unsettled state of France has allowed to spring up and flourish, none is perhaps easier to be accounted for, or more fatal in its consequences, than the slavish idolatry of the unintelligent crowd. What M. Thiers once styled "the vile multitude," is now the supreme arbiter of France; and a witty saying of the late Madame de Girardin is about to be verified: "*Il n'y a plus d'individu; nous allons au culte de 'l'on.'*"\*

It is perfectly certain, that for the last thirty or forty years — if not since the Great Revolution — the constant tendency of France has been toward the suppression of the individual, and the establishment of the supremacy of the abstraction called "Society." The many reign supreme in modern France, for the sole reason that they are the many. This, as it would not be hard to show, leads directly and inevitably to the idolatry of success, and consequently to the tacit recognition of the superiority of success to desert. If the trouble be taken to examine the whole minutely, it will be seen that *parvenu*-ism, in its strict etymological sense, is one of the vital principles of contemporary — we do not even say "Imperial" — France. The question asked is, "What has such a one arrived at?" (*À quoi est il parvenu?*) and never, "What is such a one's merit? what is his value as a man?" The consecration of notoriety, the sanction of the crowd, the stamp of success, these are what are necessary in modern France. It is easy then to comprehend that what goes under the denomination of public opinion invariably gives its verdict in favor of the age

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\* The impersonal pronoun *on*, which corresponds with the English term *they*. The expression may be translated by "they-worship."

against any protestant individual. What the age and what "everybody" approves, is what ought to be, and is not to be carped or cavilled at, nor described as immoral or wrong. What "all the world" does, and what meets with the approval of "the time," cannot be wrong. This is the creed of contemporary France, who is worn and worried beyond endurance by all she has been made to undergo and suffer for more than half a century, and who now, like many elderly ladies toward the close of a misspent life, seeks a refuge from all care and all pre-occupation in that utter indifference to great and serious things which characterizes premature decay and incurable disease. France, after restlessly turning from side to side of her sick couch, has now, under the influence of a strong soporific, found a posture of absolute repose for her wearied, aching frame, and in a languid tone, from the depths of her half-slumbering, barely conscious state, she begs above all things not to be "disturbed"!

This is what M. Lanfrey so very clearly perceives and so very truly represents; it is this condition of helpless torpor against which his hero, Everard, so protests and inveighs. And it is for this reason—because he so accurately sees the dangerous prostration of his country, and because he so protests against it—that we unhesitatingly say *Everard* is the most thoroughly representative book that has appeared in France since *René*.

M. de Châteaubriand's *René* is at one and the same time a *chef-d'œuvre* and representative. It is a *chef-d'œuvre* because it is whole and entire,—the book of him who wrote it, and of him only; it is representative, because its author happens to be pre-eminently representative of his epoch. *René* and *Everard* are not the same individual; but, in the order of poetic generation, *Everard* is engendered by *René* as surely as ever son was by father. *René* is the mere dreamer, who springs from a period during which men of action have lorded it over a whole land. Besides what he may be personally, he is typically the incarnation of the recoil of thought against action. He is the offspring of the disgust felt by poetic temperaments at the aspect of the reign of brute force, as exemplified in the first Revo-

lution and the Empire. He is also the type of that vague, ill-defined character which usually belongs to the men who put intellect above everything else, and who, from overstraining and overtaxing the intellectual faculties, warp them, and grow to be wholly incapable of doing a plain, manly deed. René, in fine, is the Frenchman necessarily produced by the convulsions of the early revolutionary period. M. Lanfrey's hero is the child of the epoch that succeeds to the over-intellectual time,—the offspring of an era of weakness, lassitude, and discouragement, in which hopelessness has taken the place even of doubt! "Doubt!"—he exclaims in one of his letters,—“I have not even that resource; doubt even is not of our age; we cannot doubt vigorously, because *we do not feel interested in believing.*” Such, alas! is the truth; and these very sad words contain a fearfully lifelike picture of the condition to which the youth of contemporary France are now reduced.

As to Everard's history, he is a young man of good family and sufficient fortune, with enough of every qualification and every advantage to make for himself a road to distinction, to renown, in any country where men are free, where they can express or assert themselves,—in short, be themselves. Here is precisely the point where he is met by the Impossible. Everard is ambitious, nobly ambitious;—there is no place for ambition in Imperial France. He is upright, sincere, and honest;—honesty, sincerity, and uprightness have nothing to hope for or to achieve under the Empire. By all that is best, worthiest, and noblest in him, he is incapacitated from taking part in the affairs of his country. His nature prompts him to act, and there is in France no room for action;—men are required only to serve. He longs healthily, manfully, to stem the tide of stirring events, to partake largely of public life;—there is no public life in France. This is the whole story of M. Lanfrey's hero, this his romance, this his ruin; and it is strange to say, but it is true, that so thoroughly does this representation sum up the aggregate existence of society in France, that for those who are familiar with its condition the somewhat imaginative sufferings of Everard have the real, living interest of a novel

full of incidents and catastrophes. Those who know what the Empire has made of France know that a high-minded, ambitious young man could have no other destiny than that of Everard. Nor do we say this entirely in censure. The faults and follies of the race must be counted for something in its present sufferings and humiliations. It is not the despotic tendencies of Louis Napoleon that are alone answerable for the wretched condition to which Frenchmen are reduced. Had they been better fitted for freedom, they would probably have been deprived of it less easily. Self-preservation is the law of governments as of individuals, and it is an incontrovertible fact that the Empire can preserve existence only by unmitigated tyranny, by a compression whose hold is never for one instant relaxed. For this, as we say, we do not wholly blame the Emperor; but that the necessities of his position oblige him to pursue a policy which prevents all healthy political development in the nation, is a fact which his own warmest adherents cannot deny. The better fitted any man should be for becoming a great and good citizen, the less would it be possible for him to attain to his proper development in France. *Les Lettres d'Everard* is the protest of a young, brave, and ardent spirit against this state of things, the record of the sufferings and "despair unto death" of a victim to the *régime* which the weakness and levity of France have entailed upon herself.

Everard has no passion except the passion for public life, that passion for which the advance of this nineteenth century seems to have guaranteed the gratification in all that feel it. This exclusively political passion is natural to our age; more than ever before it may be that to which a high-minded man should consecrate his life. Yet the Frenchman may not venture to cherish it; he must be content to devote his energies to lesser aims, to scatter them abroad in small and various achievements, for it is forbidden him to direct them to the attainment of any noble public purpose.

Everard instinctively feels this, and in his first burst of anger retires to the solitude of the country. This however soon appears to him an unmanly and unworthy abandonment of self, and he buckles on his moral armor, and, repairing to Paris,

bravely throws himself into the *mêlée*, resolved to play his part to the uttermost in the life-battle, and desirous of achieving any public good at the cost of any personal sacrifice. His determination is to do all he can do, and he very soon discovers that he can do nothing; for there is nothing to be done; — nothing which a man, however great, good, or heroic, can do to be useful to France; and the more he is great, good, or heroic, the less is there anything he can do. Freedom being destroyed, and the circulation of the national life stopped for that very reason, perturbation only can be occasioned by any individual action. Here is the secret of Everard's discouragement. He sees himself defeated, and defeated because he so largely possesses those qualities which in any healthily-organized state must insure his being victorious.

Of course the book ends with the death of its hero; but as mere discouragement, however profound, rarely kills a well-constituted young man under thirty, the author is obliged to resort to a dramatic effect, which is perhaps somewhat out of keeping with the rest of the work. Everard, sick at heart, despairing of France, disdainful of the men of his age and race, turns to a field of action out of his own country, joins one of the late plots for liberating Italy, (we take it, Bentivenga's insurrection in Sicily,) and is the very first victim who falls. It is difficult to see what other end could be found for him; but the manner of his end does not occupy the reader an instant, so absorbed are we by the manner of his life, — by the impossible position made for him by events.

We have spoken of successive revolutions as having contributed to bring Frenchmen into their actual state. From this point of view, every phase of the revolutionary history of France, from 1793 until now, is full of interest; but it is impossible not to note in the first Empire, and the reactions it brought about, one of the immediate causes of the lassitude and utter exhaustion of the French people at this moment. M. Thiers himself is so struck with this, that, in spite of all his admiration for Napoleon, he does not flinch from the acknowledgment that the Emperor had not only "worn France out," but helped to tire and exhaust the whole human race. "If," says the historian, speaking of the first abdication in April,

1814, — “if his indefatigable lieutenants were at this moment so over-fatigued, it was because he had struck in them at the very source and principle of vital energy, and had spared nothing, neither events nor men. Nor was it they only who were worn out,—it was the whole universe ; and here lay the cause of their desertion of him.”

No truer word was ever uttered. The sacrifices imposed upon the European races, whether for attack or defence, by the insatiable ambition of one man, had, to employ a familiar phrase, “used up” the entire reserve even of human energies that was laid up for the exigencies of the future, and when those exigencies came, they found everywhere a strange lassitude and a distaste for enterprise. France is more demoralized than the other nations of Europe ; it is doubtful whether she is more weakened by fatigue. But if we would see clearly where lies the origin of the present deplorable state into which the French have sunk as a race, we think there may be some profit in reading, in the pages of Napoleon’s most enthusiastic historian, the account of the manner in which the men who had shared his greatness fell off from him in his adverse fortune. We know of few episodes more dramatic in history, ancient or modern.

On the 6th of April, 1814, at Fontainebleau, after the previous night and all the morning had been absorbed in preparing the act of abdication, the Marshals were sent for by the Emperor, to be informed of what had just passed. When they were admitted to his presence, they knew nothing of all that had occurred, and the first thing they did was to recommence all their complaints, and to recapitulate their grievances. One after the other they repeated the same phrases, saying that “the army was powerless,—had no more blood to shed, so much having been wasted already” ; and in such haste were these men to obtain leave to go and offer their homage to the new government, that, according to M. Thiers, they would, “had they met with any resistance on his part, have failed in respect” toward their old master. He took a malicious pleasure in leaving them for some few moments in all their anxiety, and then, looking them in the face, said : —

“Gentlemen, calm your apprehensions. Neither you nor the army

will be required to make further sacrifices ; no more blood need be shed. I have consented to abdicate without any longer negotiation. I could have wished, as much for you as for my own family, to have secured to my son the succession to the throne. I believe this arrangement would have been more beneficial even to you than to me ; for you would then have been called upon to live under a government suited to your origin, to your sentiments, to your interests. . . . . This settlement of affairs was, I conceive, a possible one, but an infamous desertion\* has deprived you of a position I had tried to insure to you. If it had not been for the betrayal of the sixth *corps d'armée*, we might have secured what I allude to, and even more ; we might have restored to France something of what she has now lost. Events have been otherwise ordained. I submit to my destiny,—do you submit to yours. Resign yourselves to serve the Bourbons, and to serve them faithfully. You longed for repose,—you will have it ; but (God grant I may be mistaken !) I do not believe ours to be a generation fitted to repose. I believe your so much-wished-for peace will destroy more amongst you on your soft feather-beds than would have been destroyed by war in our camp-life.”

After these words, Napoleon read to his companions in arms his formal abdication. M. Thiers’s description of this scene, and his own commentaries on it, are worth quoting :—

“ When they had heard the Act of Abdication read to them, the lieutenants of Napoleon threw themselves eagerly forward upon their chief, and, seizing his hands, thanked him with effusion for his ‘sacrifice,’ loudly repeating what they had already declared touching his former conditional abdication, namely, that in thus descending from the throne he showed himself greater than ever. He permitted their secret joy to indulge in these last flatteries, and let them say what they chose, for he had no desire to degrade either them or himself by any miserable recriminations. And in truth, who and what had made these men what they were? Who, but he himself,—but he only, who, by despotism, had enervated those around him, undermining their moral strength, while on the other hand wearing them out materially by war? He had therefore no right to complain, and he did well in recognizing what was the inevitable result of his own errors, and in yielding to necessity without any resistance, which would have been in reality humiliating both to others and to himself.”

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\* The going over of Marmont to the coalition army.

In alluding to the dramatic power with which this scene at Fontainebleau is given by M. Thiers, we cannot refrain from recalling the reader's attention to what we ourselves had occasion to remark in a recent number of this Review, in reference to Victor Hugo's last work, *La Légende des Siècles*. It is impossible, while reading *Le Consulat et l'Empire*, and seeing the actors in the colossal drama live as they do before you, not to feel that the whole is essentially epic, and finds its fittest form in the magnificent verse of the inspired bard of modern France. Charlemagne, offering in vain gold, lands, and titles to his gorged, worn-out warriors, just to make one last effort, just once more to act over again their own exploits of the past, and meeting with refusal and sullen discontent,—this is even a more real description of the shameful and sad desertion of Napoleon in 1814, than the statement made by M. Thiers; and it is so simply for the reason that the events themselves are “larger than life.” Poetry fits them better than prose.

Let it not be forgotten, however, that though, as far as honor was concerned, the conduct of his Marshals to the Emperor was indefensible, it was, considered from the mere point of view of human nature and human weakness, the most natural behavior possible. It was, as M. Thiers says, an “inevitable result” of Napoleon's own mistakes; and it is in this light that we have to do with it, as bearing immediately upon succeeding generations of Frenchmen.

Pascal has wisely said, “*L'homme n'est ni ange ni bête, et le malheur veut que qui veut faire l'ange fait la bête.*” Nothing can be more evident. Human nature is human, not “angelic,” and those who attempt to stretch it beyond its natural compass, to force it into regions not its own, produce surely a reaction more violent even than was the action; and, for having tried to compel human power to achievements superior to humanity, they see that power escape them, and, rebounding, sink far beneath the level for which it was originally intended. To serve his restless, insane ambition, Napoleon would have condemned his companions to a continuance of fabulous deeds, such as are recorded in mythological annals. The result was, that the men from whom he so long required more than men could do, showed themselves at last capable only of less

than men ought to do. The wars of Napoleon so exhausted the strength and ardor of the French people, that the generation immediately derived from the race which had been overtaxed in activity had a repugnance and disgust for all activity of every kind, and was a generation of disputants and dreamers, of would-be poets and philosophers, of men who, simply because they did not and could not act, denominated themselves thinkers. We would have it well understood that we are not seeking to undervalue the really distinguished men who, during the post-Imperial period, took the lead in France; the fifteen years of the Restoration count some of the most eminent individuals French civilization can boast during the last two centuries,—but they are individuals only. The French race was grievously the worse for having so long been placed in contact with other races only by reciprocal carnage. The race, as a race, was exhausted, worn out, and essentially unmanly. It was quite capable of being again, at some future period, roused to mere warlike action, because, as Emerson has truly remarked in his “English Traits,” the populations that are not manly may be warlike; but for that perfect development of mind and body which makes men and citizens, the French race was, by the Bonapartean rule, unfitted. This is what is made manifest by an attentive study of M. Thiers’s seventeenth volume, and the effects of this it is that we are called upon to recognize in M. Lanfrey’s psychological rather even than political tale of *Les Lettres d’Everard*.

There is, throughout these concluding pages on the Consulate and Empire, a conflicting and undeniably melancholy feeling. You see that the author is divided in his own mind between his admiration for the conqueror, for the military genius, who made France so famous, who caused her to be so much talked of in the world, and his grief at the admission he is forced to make of the inferiority of his countrymen in a political point of view,—an inferiority proceeding, he does not deny it, from the despotic *régime* to which they had been so ruthlessly subjected. When you have finished the perusal of this very remarkable book, you feel that you hold the key to nearly all that has occurred in France since the epoch of which it treats, and you are perfectly sure that

you could not have been listening to a more incontrovertible authority than its writer, when a question of the nation's political unworthiness is involved. M. Thiers is so violently national, he is, whatever may be his other defects, so flaming with patriotic zeal, that any acknowledgment coming from him of an insufficiency or a wrong in France comes with irresistible weight. A more authentic record, therefore, of the irretrievable harm done to Frenchmen by the Bonapartean rule can nowhere be found than in this latest volume of M. Thiers, and that is, perhaps, one of the reasons why no foreigner ought to leave the book unread.

This is not, however, its only merit. We have already touched upon the extraordinary dramatic force with which some of the scenes are painted; there is also no slight interest attaching to certain incidents related, we believe for the first time, by M. Thiers in these pages. Many of these reveal not only the singular mental state of the man whose closing career is narrated, but the singular state to which that man himself felt and avowed that he had brought the country. We cite as an illustration the following:—

“In the midst of his perpetual ‘adventures,’ and of the varying chances of war, Napoleon, chiefly called upon to witness the heroism of the army, and its devotion, although its discontent was also frequently visible, was far from despairing of his ultimate success; he counted on his own genius, believed more than ever in the resources of his art, though at the same time he did not indulge in any illusion as to the difficulties of his political position. He hesitated somewhat at avowing to what a degree he had alienated the nation from himself by his continual wars, and by his arbitrary rule; still, on the whole, he was not blind to the moral state of France. After the battle of Arcis sur Aube (the last at which Napoleon commanded in person during the memorable *campagne de France*), he had a curious conversation with General Sebastiani. It was on the field of action itself, the last sounds of battle not having yet died away; he was familiarly conversing with his countryman (Sebastiani was a Corsican like himself), in whom he recognized a sharp and strong political sense. All at once he exclaimed, ‘Well, General, what do you say to all you have seen?’ ‘I say,’ was the reply, ‘that of course your Majesty is possessed of some resources we know not of.’ ‘Those only which you see before your eyes,’ were Napoleon’s words;

‘none other!’ ‘In that case,’ rejoined Sebastiani, ‘how is it that your Majesty does not try the experiment of raising up the nation?’ The Emperor smiled sadly. ‘That is a chimera,’ he answered, ‘a dream, borrowed from the traditions of Spain, and of the French Revolution. Raise up the nation indeed!—raise up a nation in which the Revolution has destroyed the nobles and the priests, and in which I have myself destroyed the Revolution! . . . . There is nothing to be done.’”

M. Thiers, commenting upon this, says:—

“The General was stupefied with astonishment, and in boundless admiration of the coolness and profoundness of judgment here evinced; but he asked himself how it was that so much genius had not succeeded in preventing such gross mistakes.”

Well might he ask this, for it is what every one has asked himself who has carefully studied the history of France for the last three quarters of a century. And here we come again necessarily to the great and all-important question of the compatibility or incompatibility of revolutionary principles of government with an old-world race, and to the question also whether Napoleonism, properly so called, did any good to France, or did it the very greatest harm possible. The possibility of “raising the nation” in 1814 and 1815 has been, and still is, one of the great points of controversy between the rival schools of French politicians. The Imperialists, of course, maintain that, had the Emperor ventured upon the experiment, the whole nation would have risen; while the Liberals and anti-Bonapartists (to a man) say the experiment was an impossible one, for there was no nation to raise. The Republicans have another theory. They say: “There was a nation, but you could not raise it; it would not rise for you.” Now, we are bound in all justice to say, that subsequent events seem to bear witness in favor of the discouraging assertion that there was no nation to raise; for certainly, since the period here alluded to, no nation has risen to defend itself against an enemy, external or internal, and we have here, through the most Bonapartist and most intensely national of all French historians, the acknowledgment of Napoleon that, as far as he was personally concerned, he had partaken of the opinion

of those most opposed to his own sway, most wedded to the conviction that he had been the main destroyer of all national power and high independent spirit in France.

Though certainly no book that we have read more clearly proves the harm done to France by the despotic sway of the first Napoleon, it would be unjust to say that this is the only thing proved by M. Thiers's work. There are in it, here and there, documents which place the higher personal qualities of the Emperor in a striking light, and which give him a claim to the title of hero, while too many others evince that he pre-eminently deserved the name of tyrant. We are particularly struck with this letter, written during the campaign of 1814, to Augereau, who had neglected the orders given him to organize a *corps d'armée* at Lyons. The letter is dated Nogent sur Seine, February 21, 1814, and runs thus:—

“The Minister of War has just put under my eyes the letter you wrote to him on the 16th. This letter pains me much. What! six hours after having received the first troops coming from Spain, you were not already in the field! Six hours' rest was sufficient for them. I gained the battle of Nangis with the brigade of dragoons coming from Spain, and the men had not unbitted their horses since leaving Bayonne. The six battalions from Nismes are, you say, wanting in clothing and equipments, and in proper instruction also. What a poor excuse this is, Augereau! I have destroyed eighty thousand of the enemy with battalions composed of raw recruits, without knapsacks, and only half clothed. You say that the National Guardsmen are miserable. I have four thousand such here, from Anjou and Brittany, with round hats, no sacks, but having good fire-arms; I have got a good deal out of them. There is no money, you say. Now pray where did you think money was to come from? You can hope for none till we shall have taken back our own receipts from the enemy. You have no horses, you complain. Take them everywhere! You have ‘no storehouses’! This is too ridiculous. I positively order you to start twelve hours after receiving this letter, and to take the field. If you are still the Augereau of Castiglione, keep the command you now have; if your sixty years weigh upon you, resign it, and put it into the hands of your ablest general officer. The country is threatened,—is in danger; it can be saved only by daring and strong good-will,—certainly not by vain temporizing.

You ought to have a little knot of about six thousand picked troops, at least; I have not so many, yet with what I have, I have routed three armies, made forty thousand prisoners, taken two hundred guns, and three times saved the capital. The enemy is flying on all sides, going toward Troyes. Be the first in the fire. It is of no use acting now as later times have accustomed you to do; you must draw on your heavy boots, and recur to your strong will of '93. When the French see once more your *panache* in the van, and know that you are foremost where bullets rain, you will do with them whatever you choose."

There can be no doubt about the heroic qualities of the writer of this letter, and at the present moment, when the unintelligent mass is pressing France down beneath its weight, it is satisfactory to revert even to this striking instance of individualism, though it be pervaded through and through with the intensest egotism. There is selfishness, no doubt, in it, but there is self-assertion, and in the present day the lack of whatever approaches this is utterly ruining France.

We would recommend those even who have not read the sixteen previous volumes, to read this seventeenth of M. Thiers's History. It, in reality, stands by itself, and is independent, making, as it were, a sort of *résumé* of the whole of the first Napoleon's career. M. Thiers himself has so thoroughly looked upon this volume as standing alone, that more than a hundred of its concluding pages are consecrated to a study of the rise and fall of Bonaparte, whom he conducts from Brienne to St. Helena, though in point of fact he gives no circumstantial narrative beyond the abdication at Fontainebleau. As to the Hundred Days and the campaign of 1815, the Imperialist historian (it is impossible to characterize him otherwise) will, if he touches upon this at all, (which has often been thought a matter of doubt,) touch upon it in the form of a sequel or an appendix to a History which is meant to be the chronicle of the glories of France, and to flatter the national vanity, even when the individual who is the chief object of the narration is forcedly sacrificed.

From one and all of these studies of the past we gain a deeper knowledge of the various causes of the phenomena of the present. France, who, of all countries, writes most about

herself, does all she can to help us to familiarity with her social state. At the present hour the stage is doing perhaps more in the virtual memoir-writing of the nation than any other branch of literature. Alexandre Dumas, the son, began this dramatic movement, with what is, after all, perhaps his very best piece, *Diane de Lys*. He opened his theatrical career with a drama that has nothing of the character of his later works about it,—with the so very famous *Dame aux Caméllias*. This might have been written at any period, and did not necessarily reveal any of the signs of the present time in France. It was a conventional tale set forth in true phraseology, but one in which truth went not beyond mere expression. Marguerite Gauthier became plainly a heroine throughout the world, but Marguerite Gauthier was not original, neither was she true to her time; she was a product of the past, and represented nothing when she made her appearance at the Vaudeville, in the year 1849. She was engendered by the Romantic epoch, and was simply the child of Victor Hugo's *Marion Delorme*. The old love-story succeeded, however, and in a country where the notions of right and wrong are so dim and vaguely defined as in France, the interest attaching to moral disorder was, as usual, very strong. But so evidently was it felt that the sentimental courtesan represented nothing in France, that an instant reaction took place, and *Les Filles de Marbre*, from the first hour of its performance, carried all before it. No one saw so clearly or so quickly what was passing as did young Dumas, and from that day to this he has never attempted to transform any sinner into a saint, but, on the contrary, has been harder on the sinners than most people. From the first representation of *Les Filles de Marbre* a new system of stage ethics was established, and there dates from that period a kind of attempt to preach morality to the public. M. Barrière, the author of the piece above mentioned, was undoubtedly the originator of this reaction, but the proof of its being a genuine one lies in the fact of its having been so universally followed. We will return to young Alexandre Dumas later; for the moment let us chronicle a sort of revolution that has taken place in the domain of so-called "classic art" in France. Hitherto, the representative dramas have

been confined to the lesser theatres, such as the Vaudeville and Gymnase ; they have never stormed that fortress of all conventionalism in art, the Théâtre Français. All at once, however, early in the winter of 1859–60, a “first representation” took place, and the next day a great success was registered. *Le Duc Job* was the name of the play, which, while we write, has attained the unheard of reign of a “hundred nights.” Such a fact stands isolated in the annals of the Théâtre Français, and proves how eternally true is the reply of the wife of Molière’s Sganarelle to the busybody who wishes to prevent her from being beaten by her spouse : “*Mais si je veux être battue moi ?*” The solemn company known as the *Sociétaires* of the Théâtre Français (and constituted by nothing less than the famous “Moscow Decree” of Napoleon I. in 1812) veiled its countenance in shame at the bare idea of being made the instrument of humiliation to its mighty lord and master, the public ; it vowed that its elegant, well-bred vocabulary could not furnish the hard, rough terms wherewith minor theatres castigated contemporary society,—it was too polite, too well brought up, too obedient to old traditions, and it protested that it could not and would not agree to utter rude truths to the first society of the first country in the world. Nevertheless, Sganarelle’s wife would be beaten, and she only went to the places where the sound drubbing was sure to be met with. The courtly Théâtre Français was deserted by the public. All at once comes forth *Le Duc Job*, the public is “beaten” to its heart’s content, not an unbruised spot is left, and the public, delighted thereat, flocks to the Théâtre Français every night, and applauds with the energy of the “Roughs” at the *Porte St. Martin*.

*Le Duc Job* is the work of a second-rate author, M. Léon Laya, whose literary fame will in no degree be augmented by this last production, which has no literary merit whatever, but is eminently representative, whence its prodigious and enduring success.

The hero of the drama is a young man of the highest family and connections, who has been left without fortune. He has enlisted in the African army, and, by dint of sheer courage

and good conduct, has at an early age won the rank of captain, and the Cross of the Légion d'Honneur. His real name is the Duc de Rieux, but from his poverty and his cheerful resignation he has been surnamed "Duke Job." Of course in his person are exemplified all the chivalrous virtues, all the qualities most diametrically opposed to the cold-blooded rapacious characteristics of the money-getting France of our days. In one respect the play is little more than the prose version of Ponsard's *Honneur et Argent*, inasmuch as all its attacks are directed against the one form of national corruption, which is comprised in the accusation of "gold worship." From its first to its last scene, *Le Duc Job* is the protest of real honesty, not only against dishonest practices, but against the spirit of compromise in which dishonest practices are met by persons who would not commit them themselves, but who profit by their commission, and tacitly approve of their success. The character opposed to that of the Duke Job is a certain Valette, who represents that individual now so frequently to be met with in French society, who goes by the denomination of a *faiseur*, and who makes his fortune, at the same time contriving to keep clear of the tribunals, and of any public scandal. This man is not dishonest: by no means; he aims, on the contrary, as much at having the reputation of an honest man as he does at making his fortune. He does nothing that the law can lay hold of, but he is forever doing something that just keeps clear of the law by only a hair's breadth, and something that no high-minded, conscientious man could be brought to do. His whole condemnation is to be found in the following words, addressed to him by the Duke Job: "If you force me to speak seriously, I must then say that—you are a very good fellow indeed, but that, what you do every day—I am obliged to say that I—(you insist on my being quite frank)—well, I would not do it for any number of millions."

Of course, from anything in the shape of a plot *Le Duc Job* is entirely free; it is one of the conditions of the modern French stage, that there shall be as little as possible of that old encumbrance termed a plot. The entire interest turns upon the fact of the Duke Job's being in love with his cousin, and knowing it, while she is in love with him, and does not know

it. The character of this girl is one for which too much credit cannot be given to M. Laya. She is the type of the unmarried Frenchwoman of this day, such as subdivision of property, vanity, absence of principle, and dislike of moral responsibility have made her. Yet she is thoroughly original, and we are not aware that anything resembling her has yet been attempted in the literature of contemporary France. Emma is the daughter of a banker, who married the Duc de Rieux's aunt, a handsome portionless girl, to whom the name of Madame David seemed preferable to her former condition. M. David is, on the whole, a worthy man; but his daughter is his daughter, and she is fully convinced that life without money is impracticable. Money to her mind represents the comforts and respectabilities of life. She has been taught that people who are not rich are not! She dates from the era of Balzac, who said that "women living higher up than a first floor, and not having plenty of 'luxury' round them, might be 'housewives,' but could not be called women." Now Mlle. Emma's existence is manifested only by the command of certain material superfluities, and in her way she evinces some heart, by setting to work to see how she can reconcile her "inclinations" and her "serious requirements." She diminishes the number of her horses, the price of her apartments, the cost of her dress, &c.; but of an imprudence or of a sacrifice her girl's heart of seventeen never once dreams. This is true to the life, and M. Laya deserves unqualified praise for the creation of this repulsive little personage.

That, in the end, Duke Job marries his cousin Emma, in no respect mends the matter, for, in the first place, he (fairy-tale-wise) becomes the proprietor of a very large fortune, and in the next, the mere circumstance of an interested person's making a love-match by accident, and most probably repenting it ever after, and turning the second party to it into a victim, is by no means to be accepted as a redemption for all other faults and vices. Emma remains a most perfectly representative character; so does Valette, so does M. David, the banker, and his son too, who naïvely owns that he no longer knows where "address" ends and "dishonesty" begins. All these personages are eminently representative, and it is be-

cause they are so, that the piece in which they are brought forward exercises such a durable attraction over the public.

*Le Père Prodigue* is, of the two, perhaps a shade less representative than *Le Duc Job*, and it would be a mistake to suppose it more remarkable in a purely literary aspect. The one point in which it really is representative is as illustrating the fearful state of realism or positivism to which young persons have attained in France. Nothing ever written can more thoroughly exemplify the absence of all youth among Frenchmen. It appears to us that the main object of young Dumas in this last play has been to show the difference between the men of the last and of the present generation in his own country. Whether in pursuing this aim he has meant to achieve the results which he has achieved, is a question; but the result in fact is to make the elderly prodigal a far more amiable, more human creation than his pedantic, priggish, narrow-hearted, "reasonable" son.

One of the chief features of the Frenchman of our day is also rendered to the life in this comedy, and it is a feature worthy of observation. We allude to the curious mixture of conventional good conduct and depraved sentiment so visible in the rising generation in France. In every sentimental relationship a man behaves ill,—selfishly, heartlessly, and in a way to render all those who live with or surround him utterly wretched; but he "pays his way," and "makes both ends" of his yearly income "meet," which seems now to be the one highest achievement for which a man is put on earth, in the opinion of contemporary France. Young Dumas's hero, André de la Rivonnière, has all the practical qualities that are conceivable in a human being. He is regular in all his habits, attends church, pays his debts, keeps his promises, avoids all scandal, ignores the very name of an imprudence, and is the most prosaic, methodical, uninteresting, unlovable individual that can well be imagined. He is the very model of the husband whom French mothers would choose for their girls, and whom (could anything excuse misconduct) the said girls would almost stand excused for deserting a few years after marriage. He is full of reason, and without one impulse. His father, the Count de la Rivonnière, is the exact opposite

of the son ; he has all the qualities of which the latter knows not even the name ; and while you cannot justify any one of his acts, you are irresistibly compelled to like him who commits them. André may, strictly speaking, lay claim to the title of *un honnête garçon*, his entire existence and whole nature being made up of negatives ; but there is in him not one single little thing that furnishes him with the right to be called a gentleman. He has no gentleness, no feelings which prompt to chivalry, no tenderness for the suffering or compassion for the weak, no respect for women, and no generosity under any form whatever. Taught by the success we have mentioned of *Les Filles de Marbre*, M. Dumas has also one of these ladies in his comedy, and has painted her under colors as displeasing as it was in his power to select. She is perfectly true, as the difference of the manner in which she is treated by the father and the son is likewise revoltingly true. Mlle. Albertine is first the favorite of André, and then (a not uncommon occurrence) of M. de la Rivonnière the elder ; but, while you are pained that a gentleman should be so duped as the latter is, you have no such regret touching the former, for you really do not see, between two such "sharp hands," who runs the most risk of being the other's dupe in the end.

There is a closer connection than might be at first supposed between all the works we have glanced at and M. Sainte-Beuve's six volumes upon *Port Royal*. If the productions we have reviewed show us the present generation in France, and the generation immediately preceding it, M. Sainte-Beuve's book leads us at once far beyond, to the contemplation of that society which best contrasts with the actually existing society of France. Most of our readers probably know that in the earlier years of Louis XIV. the monastery of Port Royal des Champs, in the valley of Chevreuse, was a spot to the close neighborhood of which those retired who most had turned in disappointment from the vain, empty glories of the world and of the court. Port Royal was as famous for the solidity of its penance-doing, as Versailles for the solidity of its splendor ; they were not far asunder, and to a certain degree were complements of each

other. If Racine had shown himself the weak slave of vanity and self-seeking during his secular career, he was really an humble Christian when he retired to Port Royal and the Jansenist doctors; and if Madame de Longueville had gratified both passion and pride at the expense of principle while shining on the world's stage, under the severe rule of the Jansenist confessor, M. Singlin, she largely atoned for her sins.

We earnestly recommend M. Sainte-Beuve's work to all who desire to be more thoroughly and impartially acquainted with the society of the seventeenth century in France. They persuade us still more of the truth of M. Cousin's expression, "*Dans un grand siècle tout est grand*," and show also how diametrically the reverse of anything *grand* is the present age in France.

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ART. XII.—*Opere di Ugo Foscolo*:—*Prose Letterarie*. 4 vols.—*Prose Politiche*. 1 vol.—*Epistolario*. 3 vols.—*Poesie*. 1 vol. Firenze: Felice Le Monnier.

ONE day in the autumn of 1827, a Spanish ecclesiastic, two Englishmen, and two Italians followed the mortal remains of an illustrious stranger to the churchyard of Chiswick. They witnessed the decent but humble burial; and one of them caused a slab inscribed with the name of the deceased and the date of his birth and death to be placed over the grave. Such were the obsequies of a poet who had celebrated the sanctities of the tomb with an eloquent pathos such as endears the muse of Gray,—who had touched and fired countless hearts in his youth by the romance of patriotism, and won the earnest attention of scholars in his prime by developing the innate felicities of a beautiful language, illustrating the best significance of a national literature, and weaving the classic imagery of Greece into the most fervid and finished expression of sentiment, fancy, and reflection;—of one who had battled for Italian freedom and progress with sword and pen, had known